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America's Schoolchildren Celebrate the Bicentennial

Summer Food Service for Children- **JACKSONVILLE'S PROGRAM GROWS**

By Anne Murray

What does it take to feed a Type A lunch to nearly 11,000 needy children every day in a city that sprawls over 867 square miles?

The people who run the summer food service program in Jacksonville, Florida, can tell you. Theirs is the largest operation of its kind in the State, and it requires detailed planning and scheduling, efficient and economical management, personnel

experienced in mass food production, automated packaging equipment and, most importantly, the support and cooperation of many individuals and agencies.

Jacksonville is truly concerned about its young residents. The city boasts a youth orchestra, a children's museum and planetarium, a 60-acre zoo, a community school enrichment program and over 200 parks and playgrounds.

The city takes particular pride in its sponsorship of the summer lunch program administered under the USDA Summer Food Service Program for Children. The Jacksonville City Council is so enthusiastic about the program that an allocation for it is included in the city's regular budget.

Among the agencies cooperating in the local program are the Jacksonville Department of Human Resources, Jacksonville Department of Recreation and Public Affairs, Duval County Board of Education, YMCA, YWCA, Boys' Clubs, Urban League and several churches.

First a pilot project

The first summer lunch program in the city was "Operation Brown Bag," a 1969 pilot project administered by the Greater Jacksonville Economic Opportunity Commission and jointly funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity and the city. Henry Stout, an administrative assistant in the Department of Human Resources and the coordinator of the 1976 summer program, arranged for the pur-

chase of a supply of brown sanitation bags which had been declared excess by the U.S. Navy—hence the origin of the project name. The plastic-lined bags were well suited for the hand-packed lunches.

City officials were impressed with the success of "Operation Brown Bag," and seeing the long-range benefits of the program, Human Resources Director Donald R. McClure recommended that the city take over the program and fund it on a permanent basis.

Mr. McClure commented, "This program not only gives children something to eat, it gives them something to do; it keeps them out of trouble."

For the next 2 years the city operated the program in much the same way the original sponsor had. City Council contracted with the school system to provide lunches at the cost of production, which was 37 cents per lunch in 1970. The Council could have contracted with a private vendor but felt that the school food service people understood the Type A pattern and were more interested in feeding the children. Chief of Parks and Recreation Julian Barrs praised the cooperation received from the school system and the "fine food service for the money we spend."

Good management gets results

By 1972, the program was serving an average of 10,389 meals per day, and it became necessary for the school board to lease automatic packing equipment. The use of the

A sandwich stacking system has enabled Jacksonville's food service workers to almost double their per-hour production. They "paint" huge trays of bread with sandwich fillings, like mayonnaise or mustard, using real paint brushes. Then they add the filling, here luncheon meat, then a two-slice layer of bread which forms the top slice of the first layer of sandwiches and the bottom slice of the second layer. When the conveyor belt operation begins, the workers simply take the sandwiches off the trays and add them to the lunch packs, along with fruit, vegetables, and milk. A shrink tunnel seals the packs in plastic.



equipment doubled the output per labor hour.

Last summer, the daily average was 10,545 meals. During the 39-day period of operation, the program served a total of 411,273 meals—an increase of 93,790 over 1974 figures.

In 1975, the cost of preparing each lunch was 73 cents. This included the cost of food, equipment, production workers, and drivers, gas and oil for the school delivery trucks. The program received \$306,663 in Federal funds from FNS and \$118,712 in matching funds from the city of Jacksonville—\$40,000 cash and \$78,712 in-kind contributions. The in-kind total included administrative and recreation personnel, use of delivery trucks, trash collection, and utilities, police protection and custodial service for the food preparation sites.

Stout noted that Jacksonville is very conservative in its fiscal management, but the summer feeding program has had no problems in receiving city funding. "The city council's philosophy is simply that programs that work are funded; those that don't, are not."

The administrative cost of each meal is less than 3 cents—evidence of efficient management. Operating expenses are kept to a minimum by centralizing food production, using school food service facilities and personnel, purchasing large volumes on a bid system, using USDA-donated foods, and monitoring.

At the end of the 1975 summer, the program had underspent its original

budget by approximately \$102,000.

Staffing and food preparation

The summer program employs 63 salaried workers—food production personnel, site monitors and program administrators—and about 500 volunteers at the recreation sites. Members of the Neighborhood Youth Corps, under the Jacksonville Youth Employment Program, also help distribute lunches and clean sites.

Many of the paid employees would not have had jobs during the summer months without the program. All of those in food preparation are experienced food service workers from various school cafeterias, and the five site monitors are cafeteria managers during the school year. The site monitors visit each of their assigned sites at least once a week. They check deliveries, observe feeding procedures and generally lend a hand wherever needed.

Program administrators say there is much competition for the various jobs, and those who are selected really need the work. They are willing to accept early hours and tight schedules. Duval County School Food Service Director Ruth Hose points out, "Everything must click; everyone must show up. Those who want to work for the summer program understand how important it is to come to work and be on time. With our assembly-line production, our deadlines are critical."

Training sessions for the workers start 2 weeks before the program operation begins. Many of the food

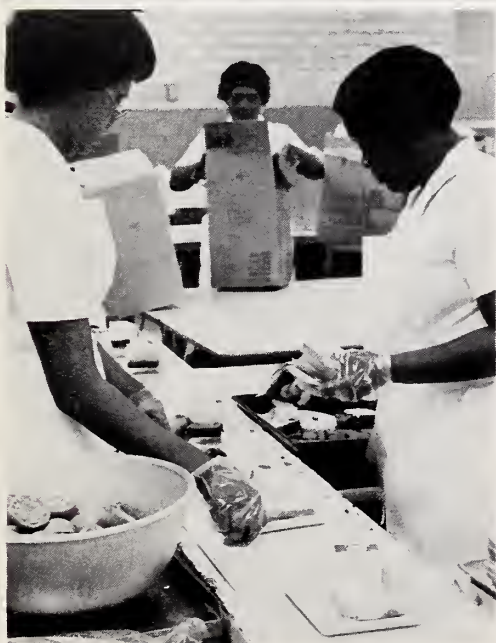
preparation people must be completely reoriented. To many who are accustomed to self-contained school kitchens, satellite production is completely new.

Much of the credit for the smooth operation of the production end of the program goes to production supervisor Vera Burgland, who has been with the summer program since "Operation Brown Bag." She has had the overall responsibility for the preparation, packaging, and delivery of lunches.

The two production centers, Eugene Butler Junior High and Highlands Junior High, open at 4:30 each morning. The workers spend the early hours in food preparation—making sandwiches, frying chicken, washing and cutting the fresh fruits and vegetables, and baking desserts.

Ms. Burgland has introduced many labor-saving production methods to the program. For example, she developed a sandwich-stacking procedure that has allowed workers to almost double their per-hour production of this cold lunch mainstay. Ms. Burgland had demonstrated the technique at State school food service meetings.

The workers literally paint huge trays of bread with a sandwich spread—mustard, mayonnaise or a combination—using real paint brushes. On the painted bread they place the sandwich fillings—luncheon meat, ham and cheese, bologna. Then a two-slice layer of bread goes on, forming the top slice of the first layer of sandwiches and



the bottom slice of the second layer. The workers repeat the process—painting, filling, two slices of bread—they never handle individual sandwiches.

Around 9 a.m. the assembly-line packing of the lunches begins. Paper trays move down the conveyor belt and the components of the lunch are added along the way: the entree—hot dog, corn dog, fried chicken, or a sandwich; raw fresh vegetables—tomato, bell pepper strips, cucumber, carrot or celery sticks; then fruit—banana, plum, orange or apple sections; dessert—usually a cookie or brownie; and a carton of milk.

When filled, each tray slides into a clear plastic bag and then into a shrink tunnel which seals the bag. The lunches emerge from the shrink tunnel onto a carousel, from which they are counted and packed in large cardboard boxes for delivery. The end result: an appealing lunch tightly sealed for freshness and sanitation.

Twelve Duval County school trucks—six per production center—begin their runs at 10:45 a.m. Each driver delivers lunches to four feeding sites before returning to the center for a new load, making three or four trips per day. All children have their lunches by 1 p.m.

In 1975, the city had 75 feeding sites: community schools, academic schools, parks and recreation centers, churches and HUD housing projects. The sites were various sizes, serving as few as 75 children or as many as 600.

Administrators point out that the lunches are quite a draw for the recreation program; they attract children to the recreation areas and introduce them to constructive, supervised activities. Many school principals and recreation sponsors have asked for the lunch program for their sites.

Site managers helpful

Each site has a manager—last year there were 75. Site managers usually come from the feeding site area. They know the neighborhood, its problems and the children who live there. They must maintain attendance records and report daily to the production center any adjustments in the number of meals needed so as to avoid wasting food.

In packing their own lunches at home, many of the site managers include some of the same foods that the children will be served that day. The good example set by the managers often encourages the children to try new foods.

The lunches are based on a 2-week cycle menu developed by school food service personnel in accordance with USDA guidelines. Choice of foods depends on suitability for the satellite operation, cost, convenience, and acceptability.

The site managers are a good source of feedback to the production managers. They report what foods are the most popular with the children (fried chicken and shredded ham and cheese on bun!) and any foods that present special problems.

For example, at one time lunch packs included whole fruits and vegetables. The site managers reported that many of the younger children who were losing teeth could not bite into the large pieces and that some of the older children were throwing the apples, oranges, and tomatoes. The production people solved the problem by slicing or sectioning the produce—making it easier to eat and less likely to be used as ammunition in a playground battle.

Feedback from the site managers helped with another serving problem. Food service personnel were having trouble keeping milk below the recommended 40-degree serving temperature. At the recommendation of the Jacksonville Health Department, the dairy agreed to deliver frozen milk to the production sites where it is kept in freezers until the lunches are assembled. Now when the lunch reaches the child, the milk has thawed, but is still very cold and has helped to cool the entire lunch.

Many activities offered

Rules are important at the feeding sites. The children know that they are expected to participate in the recreation programs—not just show up for lunch. There was one instance where the city officials had to demonstrate that emphatically.

At one of the sites last year, some children were arriving at feeding time, picking up their lunches, and leaving. The situation reached the point where the sites had to be

closed down for 3 days. During that time, program officials went from door to door in the neighborhood distributing flyers and explaining the rules of program participation. Fortunately, this was an isolated situation, but, as Henry Stout commented, “We must hold a tight fist and let people know that we have rules and regulations to follow. We’ll close down a site if we have to.”

Program officials are fair but firm; they believe that the program should help teach the children responsibility and discipline. If a child is not cooperative, he is asked to leave the program. Food service director Ruth Hose says, “The best program results when people respect each other, and you must have discipline before you have respect.”

There are a variety of supervised activities at the feeding sites, including structured academic classes, arts and crafts, music, movies, indoor and outdoor games, swimming, skating and even special programs for the handicapped.

Increase expected this year

The summer of 1975 had scarcely ended before the people in the program were evaluating it and planning for 1976. This year’s program may require a third production site to handle the expected 25 percent increase in program participation. In an effort to reach some of the smaller pockets of poverty that have not previously been served, program sponsors would like to increase the number of feeding sites from 75 to 100. This will require an additional five site monitors. The budget for the 1976 program had already been approved by early March.

The Jacksonville summer program shows what community interest and cooperation can accomplish. The city has benefited in many ways—the program has provided jobs and brought Federal funds into the area, and it has given support to city recreation programs. In all, the summer program has helped to improve the quality of life in Jacksonville.

Moreover, the program has accomplished its main goal: to feed needy children.

Julian Barrs summed it up, “If we didn’t have the program, we’d have lots of hungry kids.” ☆

EATING FAMILY STYLE

A new approach to serving lunch is getting favorable reaction from students. Family style serving can be a permanent arrangement or an occasional replacement for the conventional cafeteria line method. The following stories show how it's working in two areas.

By Herb Strum and Melanie Watts



Every lunch is family style

It's only 11:00 a.m., but lunchtime has already begun for children in grades one through six at Sharpsburg Elementary Public School. They file into the dining room and head directly for their favorite tables, already set with dishes, silverware, napkins, and baskets of rolls.

Does this sound a little different than other lunch programs? No lines? No trays? Wait, there's more.

The children sit down, and within minutes, the cafeteria staff arrives to serve them from food carts filled

with bowls of baked meat loaf, mashed potatoes and gravy, buttered succotash, chilled cranberry sauce, butter for the rolls, pints of milk, and cream pie squares.

Are the children being pampered? Not at all, says James Burk, superintendent of the Fox Chapel Area School District in western Pennsylvania. The children are participating in a "dream" Dr. Burk has nurtured ever since he entered the field of education.

Dr. Burk explains, "I believe that the lunch period should be an event, an interlude worth waiting for and anticipated by the children in their daily school routine.

"School lunch as we know it today generally means lining up for food, carrying trays, and rushing to find a spot at a table with your favorite friends. It's all too structured, too institutional, and too harried," he adds.

For a long time, the superintendent has been convinced that, if possible, a school should serve lunch in a relaxed and uninstitutionalized atmosphere where children can engage in conversation.

This "dream" became a reality in the Sharpsburg School about 4 years ago. The school, built in 1906, was undergoing extensive renovation both inside and out, and Dr. Burk and his staff decided they could install a family style lunch program in the basement of the building.

District food service manager Jean Thomas and her assistant, Helen Hoffman, consulted with an architect about plans for the facility. With her 18 years of school food service experience, Ms. Thomas had a clear idea of what Sharpsburg needed. They agreed on a 30- by 75-foot dining room with a 20- by 25-foot kitchen area, large enough to accommodate a double convection oven and a four-well capacity steam table. Since the food would be prepared at the district's central kitchens and delivered each day, their main concern was planning enough room to maintain hot food and get ready to serve family style.

Installing the dining and kitchen areas was only the first step, and Ms. Thomas says building a staff was an equally important task. "It was not easy," she points out. "My most important job was to sell my food service personnel on the concept that this type of lunch service would not only be more demanding, but they would have to become personally dedicated themselves. They would have to get directly involved with the children and their eating habits, and to some extent, even cater to their preferences."

Ms. Thomas was able to weather the difficulties, however, and piece the idea and the people together with Dr. Burk's overwhelming support. All five people on the cafeteria staff were soon sold on family style serving, and all five have stayed with the program since its inception. The staff consists

of a cafeteria manager, Amelia Wagner, who had previous experience in one of the district's high schools, and four Sharpsburg women who were new to food service. Everyone agrees they've done a wonderful job, and the program has run smoothly.

But like any new effort, during the first week of operation, the program was not without its share of problems. For instance, in what's now known as the "spaghetti incident," demand outstripped supply.

The Sharpsburg School is located in a predominately Italian-American neighborhood, and pasta dishes are favorites of the children. The day spaghetti was on the menu, nearly 100 percent of the students decided to have lunch at school.

"We had no idea that spaghetti would be so well received, since we knew that the children were getting it at home," Ms. Thomas explains. "We ran out of spaghetti early, which meant we had to maintain large pots of boiling water waiting in the wings for more spaghetti.

"It was most satisfying for all of us who worked on the line despite the difficulties we experienced," she points out.

Food for all nine schools in the district is prepared in three central kitchens located at two junior high schools and one high school. It's delivered piping hot in large metal containers to Sharpsburg as well as several other schools that have satellite kitchens.

About 300 children take part in the Sharpsburg program — nearly 100 percent of total enrollment. Serving starts at 11 and goes until 12:35, and the lunchroom is filled the entire time with about 90 to 100 students. Most of the children spend about 25 minutes in the lunchroom, eating and talking with their friends. Since they don't have to wait in line, there's more time to converse.

The seating arrangements are conducive to conversation. Tables seat four, six, or eight people, and large tables fit together to seat up to 16.

After they finish eating, the children take their dishes and utensils to the clean up area and discard paper napkins and empty milk containers. The cafeteria staff reports that there's

no problem with clean up.

Dr. Burk is pleased his "dream" has worked so well. And when you have a success on your hands, word is sure to get around.

According to Ms. Thomas, "Many professional school food service people have visited the school with disbelief on their faces and have exited as firm believers in our system."

"Are there any problems with children wasting food?" some visitors ask Ms. Thomas.

"The children are encouraged to take only as much food as they can eat," she explains. "Food waste is generally frowned upon by the children, most of whom are from hard-working families. I am sure that they appreciate the important part that food plays in their everyday lives."

Two schools use different approaches



Family style meals just might replace the cafeteria serving line in Denver schools, if students testing this new dining arrangement have anything to say about it.

Two schools, Garden Place Elementary and Del Pueblo Elementary, introduced family style meals this year, as an occasional replacement for the more conventional method of serving school lunches. The reason for the addition was the same in both cases — to improve student eating habits. Staff at both schools felt family style meals might be more personal than the regular serving line system.

Two Garden Place teachers

brought the idea back from a trip to England, where all schools use this method of meal service. "The kids there really enjoy lunch," they reported to principal Viola Kruz, who eagerly gave her full cooperation to the project. "The atmosphere in the cafeteria is pleasant, the youngsters eat all their food and use good table manners, to boot."

Plate waste was the impetus for family style meals at Del Pueblo. "The food was always good," recalls Barbara Rinkenbach, sixth grade teacher who spearheaded the communal dining experiment there. "But the kids continued to throw away more food than they ate. I figured there must be other reasons for this."

And she was right, because plate waste has decreased at both schools since the start of family style meals. The serving arrangements differ somewhat — about 70 third, fourth and fifth graders at Garden Place eat family style in the cafeteria once a week, while Ms. Rickenbach's sixth grade class dines in the classroom every few weeks.

But both schools operate the project much the same way. Participants divide up into small groups, consisting of not more than eight students each. A different member of the group serves as host or hostess for every meal, so that everyone shares this responsibility.

Duties include setting the table, making sure each bowl of food has an ample number of servings, serving the plates, clearing the table, and scraping the dishes.

Whether served family style or on the cafeteria serving line, all meals at these two elementary schools must meet requirements of the National School Lunch Program. Students have studied this meal pattern and understand that each plate must contain meat or meat alternate, two or more fruits and vegetables, bread, butter and milk.

From this study, students have gotten a better understanding of nutrition and what foods are necessary for good health.

"I think it's good for us to eat family style," reports a Del Pueblo student, "because we have to at least taste everything on our plate, whether we like it or not. I still hate

spinach, but I do like carrots better."

Understanding nutrition has helped, but so have the plate waste studies both schools have conducted in conjunction with the meals.

Sixth graders at Del Pueblo conducted a schoolwide survey, identifying the most popular and least liked foods. They gave the results to the cafeteria staff, along with some suggested menus.

"Two students have continued the project on their own," says Ms. Rickenbach, "and they've been invited to share their findings with a city committee on the school food service program."

The three classes involved at Garden Place keep a continuous plate waste count at each family style meal. And different "families" compete to have the best record.

Parents are thrilled with the improved eating habits their youngsters are bringing home, and with their new emphasis on table manners.

"Our daughter now insists we set the table for everything, even snacks, and sit down as a family," explains one obviously impressed mother.

Margaret Benton, school food service director for the Denver district, enthusiastically supports the family style meals, even if this deviation from routine requires more work of the cafeteria staffs.

Ms. Benton even hopes family style meals will expand into all schools, including secondary.

But the real advocates of this project are the youngsters involved.

"The food tastes better when we eat family style," says one youngster.

"Plus, we can get our meal served the way we like it," adds another who, during a recent meal preferred the creamed turkey served over mashed potatoes while her friend wanted the two items separated.

It's easy to see that the youngsters enjoy eating family style. A substitute teacher at Del Pueblo was amazed at the difference between this dining arrangement and the cafeteria serving line procedure she had observed at other schools.

"Just look around the room," she remarked. "The kids are carrying on quiet but happy conversations, the dining area is neat, and the kids are eating everything on their plates." ☆

A COUNTRY SCHOOL BEGINS THE DAY WITH BREAKFAST

Dawn breaks slowly over the barns and silos of the dairy farms along the shores of Lake Champlain in Addison County, Vermont. The county has been called "the land of milk and honey." Here is produced a good part of the milk and cream which becomes Vermont cheddar cheese.

As early as 5:30 or 6:00 a.m., older children on these farms are out helping with milking or barn chores. By 7 a.m., they will be ready to board their school buses, and some will ride as long as an hour over country roads before arriving in the Bridport Central School yard.

As the buses pull up, things are stirring in the schoolhouse which serves 185 students from first to eighth grade. In the kitchen, school food service director Faith Huestis and her assistant Liz LaBerge, have been making cornmeal pancakes.

The equipment is simple—a 5-gallon bowl for the homemade batter, two sheet pans used as griddles for turning out the pancakes and a small electric oven for storage when the cook gets ahead of hearty Vermont appetites.

Pancakes are on the menu only once a week. On other days, the 65 students who usually participate in the breakfast program have either oatmeal or cold cereal. Oatmeal is popular, but pancakes are the children's favorites.

The breakfast program is not new in Bridport. It began in 1966 when Faith Huestis had been on the job about a year. Less than a third of the students are eligible for free and reduced price meals (54 of 185). Ms. Huestis sees reasons for the program other than financial.

"Some younger children just aren't ready to eat a big meal when they

first get up—especially with the rush of getting dressed and catching a school bus. When they get here, they've worked up an appetite."

Principal Richard Woods, who is also sixth grade homeroom teacher, feels the early morning chores performed by farm youngsters call for extra nutrition before classroom tasks can be handled successfully.

As she flips pancakes, Liz LaBerge recalls the days when she worked as a hotel chambermaid and had to drop her children off at school before reporting to work at 7:30 a.m. For children of working mothers, and there are many even in Addison County, school breakfast means a meal late enough to hold off hunger until noon.

At Bridport, the children eat in a room adjoining the kitchen, which serves as a dining room, a library, and a classroom, depending on the hour. Supervision has never been necessary. Children carefully scrape and stack their plates. If juice is accidentally spilled, a volunteer clean-up squad goes right into action.

There is an informal air in the kitchen-dining area as teachers drop by to chat before reporting to their classrooms. The topics are rural and personal. A pump blowing out on a well is a major occurrence. A teacher, born and raised in Addison County, banters with a student, "Didn't you know Walter is your cousin?"

The 20 cents children pay for a full price breakfast is buying a lot more than the nutrients in fruit juice, milk, cereal or pancakes. For a comparatively small investment, the children are getting a sense of warmth and well-being in that hour from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. And it will pay dividends for years. ☆

By Carol D'Arezzo, Catherine Tim Jensen and Melanie Watts

There's a place in the USA where all 50 States touch. It's not a big stretch of land—in fact, it's pretty small. No one lives there, but a lush assortment of plants thrives on the unusual soil combination.

The place is tended by 600 gardeners, all from the State of Virginia . . . and the town of Hampton . . . and Paul Burbank Elementary School. The place? Well, the Hampton "gardeners" call it the Fifty State Terrarium.

It's a tribute the kids at Paul Burbank have custom-made to commemorate the 200th birthday of our country. The end result of a school project called "America: People, Places, and Purposes," the terrarium is flourishing in a soil mixture made from samples from every State.

The young students proudly explain how they came up with the rich combination. Using a map, they picked one place in each State, then wrote to a school there and asked for a small amount of dirt from the schoolyard to use in their bicentennial project.

The bicentennial holds a special excitement for young Virginians. Virginia is filled with such nationally historic sites as Jamestown and Williamsburg, Mount Vernon, and Monticello, and it has produced many famous statesmen and eight Presidents—including George Washington. It's not surprising that even its youngest residents have a real enthusiasm for American history.

events through school activities.

Hampton's school food service provides a framework for the year's activities with its monthly bicentennial theme lunches. Beverly Lowe, Hampton's director of school food service, uses the monthly bicentennial menus developed by the sponsors of the Child Nutrition Bicentennial Project—American School Food Service Association, FNS, and the State Child Nutrition Directors. With such themes as the Boston Tea Party, Colonial Christmas, Louisiana Purchase, and Westward Ho, the menus emphasize American history, people and events, and the importance of good nutrition practices in building for the future.

The teachers and school administrators in Hampton schools are enthusiastic about the bicentennial lunches, and Ms. Lowe keeps them informed of upcoming themes so they can coordinate classroom activities and projects. There's no question as to which days are "bicentennial days" at Hampton elementary schools—activities begin early, and everyone dresses in a way that's more than a little out of the ordinary.

Take Liberty Bell Lunch day at Paul Burbank, for example.

By 9 a.m. the food service people were already busy in the cafeteria. Dressed in colonial-style caps and brightly colored gowns, they were fixing Benjamin Franklin Turkey and Thomas Jefferson Cranberry-Peach Salad. By noon they would be ready to serve the school's young "sons and daughters of liberty."

their schoolmates had made in honor of the Liberty Bell Lunch.

In the center of the stage at the end of the room was a replica of the famous bell, which second graders had made using papier-mâché and an upside-down trash can. They had painted it bronze, adding a crack for the finishing touch, and topped it with a papier-mâché eagle with wings outstretched. On the backdrop behind the striking display, they had centered, "Ring for Liberty."

The Liberty Bell theme continued on an adjacent wall, where the youngsters had painted a mural entitled, "It Traveled." Careful hand-lettering carried the story of the bell's recent move from inside Philadelphia's Independence Hall to a special showcase outside the building.

Another display near the stage showed that the kids hadn't forgotten Benjamin Franklin in the day's celebration. Seven imaginative posters depicted a child's-eye view of "what made Ben tick." Some scholarly digging obviously went into these artistic renditions, which included some lesser known Franklin creations as well as his most famous ventures. One, for example, told how Franklin found an easy way to cross the river—he let a kite pull him. Another explained that the clever inventor made a frogman suit out of wood so he could swim fast.

Making school lunch an exciting, enjoyable learning experience as well as an imaginative bicentennial exercise is a goal not only at Paul Burbank Elementary, but at Hampton's 37 other public schools as well. By early December, all of Hampton's 38 schools had completed participation qualifications for the Child Nutrition Bicentennial Project and received banners from the project's sponsors. Hampton was the first major city in Virginia to have all of its schools win the award, and the event received



Throughout the country, schools are commemorating historical events in classroom projects and lunchroom activities.

widespread publicity.

The strong interest displayed by area news reporters in Hampton's school lunch program comes as no surprise. School food service director Beverly Lowe merchandises school lunch to the general public as energetically as she stimulates enthusiasm for the program within individual schools. And the district's overall 70 percent average daily participation rate speaks for itself.

Ms. Lowe has discovered that the key to good merchandising is having a good product. She's trained her school food service staff so well in the fine arts of food preparation that the folks down at City Hall choose them to serve at all school related functions.

And, that's not all. Last year, Hampton competed in the Virginia Restaurant Association's Culinary Arts Exhibition in Richmond. They won first place, over all the other schools in the State.

But being the best is not enough for Ms. Lowe and her staff. They're still vigorously pursuing ways to improve Hampton's school lunch program. Is it their Virginian pride in

quality? Or, perhaps, a determination born of knowledge of a great past and a belief in an even greater future?

Whatever the philosophy, it's created a winning mixture in which school lunch is sure to grow.

The cover design includes a photograph of Independence Hall, painted by Hampton elementary students for Liberty Bell Lunch day.

Pilgrims and Indians Sit Side by Side in Exeter

On a bright November morning in 1975, a tall black-garbed Pilgrim walked briskly through the New England countryside. A few days earlier, visitors to Boston harbor caught a

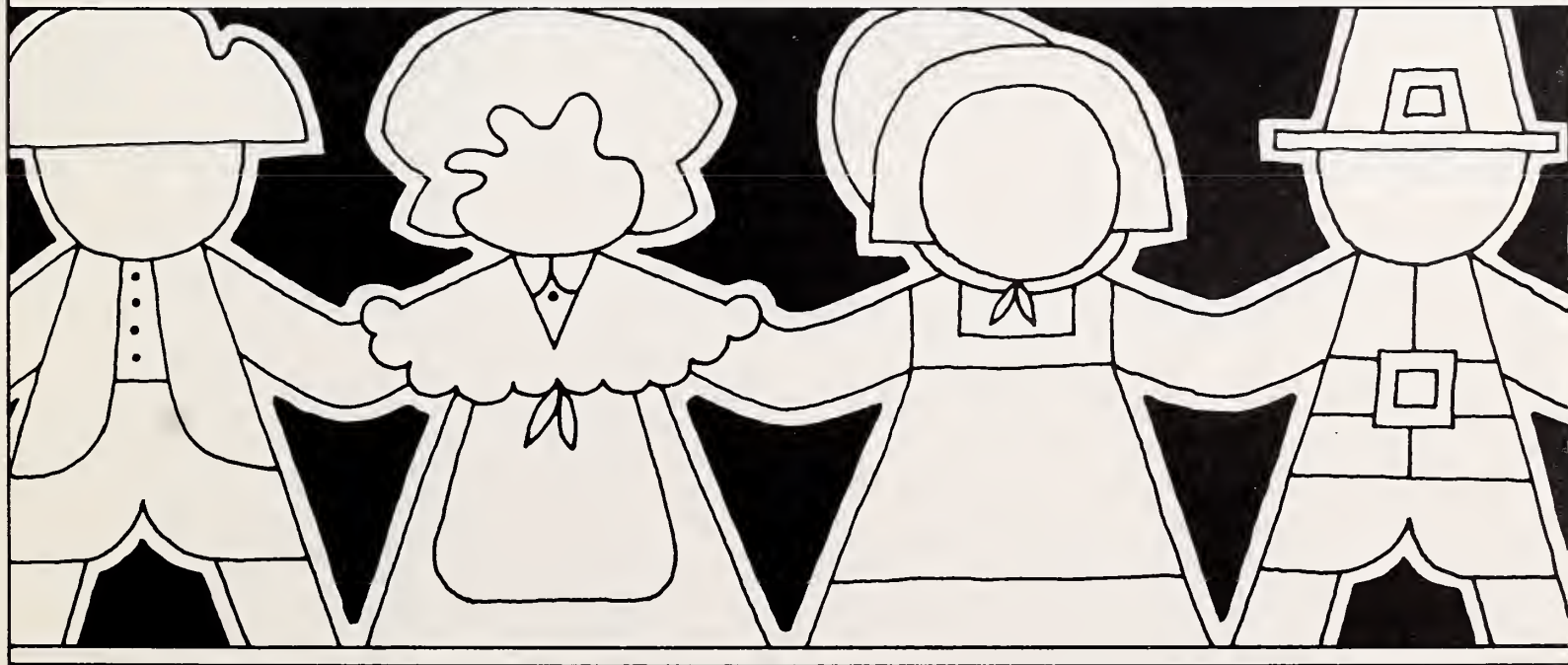
glimpse of men wrapped in blankets with painted faces on the deck of a two-masted ship. The men were lifting chests of tea as if to toss them into the brine below.

History was repeating itself as part of a bicentennial school lunch project dramatized by Audrey Eastman, school food service director in Exeter, New Hampshire.

The "men" on the ship were really six high school students and two of their teachers commemorating the historic "tea party."

The tall Pilgrim was actually Dana Wyman, an industrial arts teacher at Exeter Junior High School. Mr. Wyman, his wife, Ruth, and their two sons, Jeffrey and Drew, aged 7 and 5 respectively, dressed as Pilgrims, and Robert Roy, a science teacher, and his wife, Rossmonde, dressed as Indians. The two families sat at the head table during a special Thanksgiving school lunch at Exeter Junior High School, just as the Pilgrims and Indians had sat together, side by side at that first meal of gratitude.

The Thanksgiving celebration was more than just recreating the atmosphere of colonial days and serving





Plymouth Turkey, Miles Standish mashed potatoes, Massasoit dressing and gravy, Cranberry Bog salad, Pilgrim dessert and Mayflower milk. Audrey Eastman invited 100 children from Newfields, a nearby elementary school, for a hot school lunch. These children live outside the town of Exeter and carry their lunch to school.

Ms. Eastman is responsible for the lunch program in Exeter Junior High and Senior High, as well as five elementary schools in the area. She uses a satellite system to deliver lunches from the kitchens at two of the schools to the other five.

On the day of Thanksgiving lunch, 950 meals were prepared at the junior high school. The first 250 went out in electric warming ovens to Main Street School in the town of Exeter.

The Pilgrims, Indians and 100 Newfields children were not the only guests who joined the minister from the town Congregational Church as he led the blessing at the Thanksgiving lunch. Ms. Eastman invited others as she has always done in an effort to involve the community in the school lunch program. This year she invited senior citizens and a class of special education students from a nearby elementary school.

The lunch was served at 10:45, before three regularly scheduled junior high lunch periods. The turkeys were baked the day before under the supervision of Marilyn Morehead, lunch director at the junior high school. Ms.

Morehead and her crew of nine worked smoothly to serve lunch promptly. Work in the kitchen started at 7 a.m. that day.

As the kitchen staff made the meal, a video crew taped the preparation for use in training school food service personnel under a project at the University of New Hampshire, made possible by an FNS grant.

The lunch was a great success. Some first graders having their first hot school lunch were uneasy as they suddenly had to cope with straws, silver and trays, but their teachers helped them.

As the children ate, a high school student dressed as an Indian strolled from table to table softly improvising folk songs on the guitar.

Audrey Eastman is full of ideas to make school lunch more fun. Now in her fourth year as director, she continues to push for greater participation. During the past year she has more than doubled the number of students participating in the lunch program at Exeter High School. She serves two menus at the school each day and maintains a snack bar.

Bicentennial menus receive extra attention and Ms. Eastman promotes each menu with a special event. In October, in addition to inviting parents and other community members to lunch, she had a buffet for the high school teachers served by seniors. Last Christmas, children from two institutions in neighboring towns

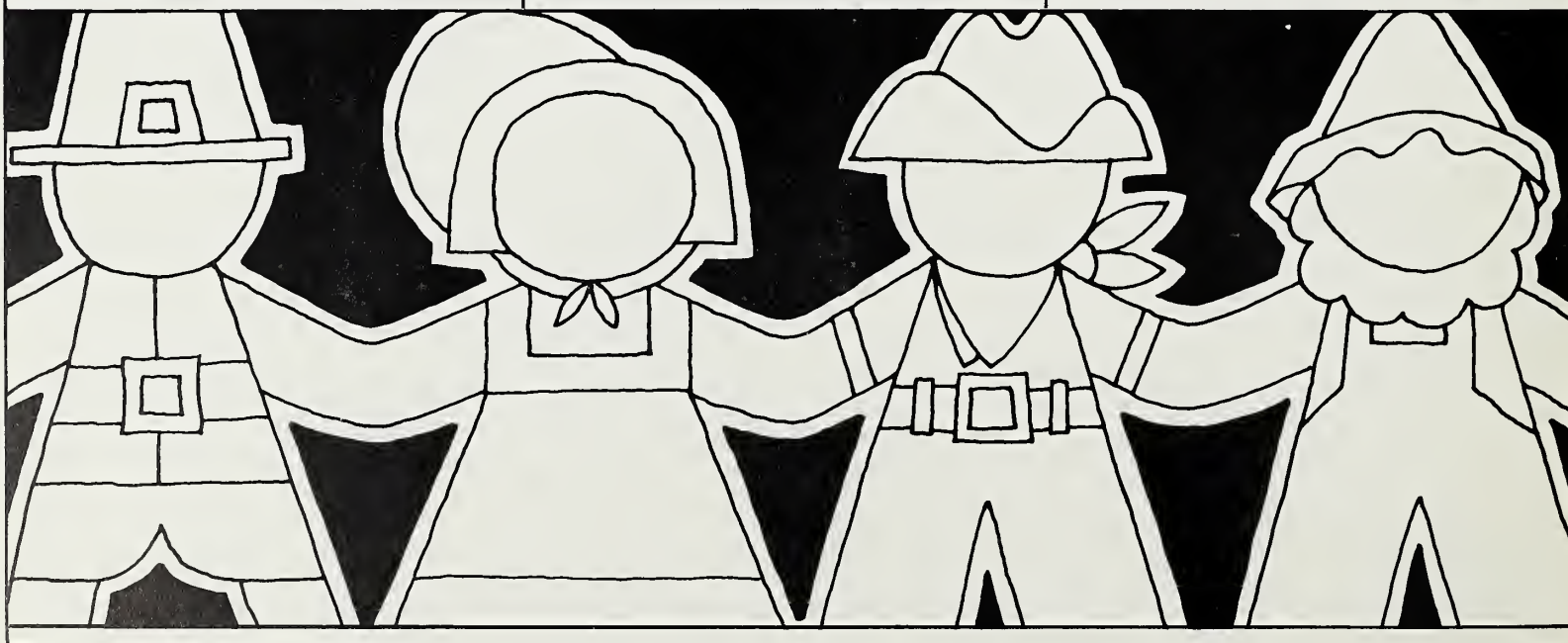
shared lunch with Exeter students.

Ms. Eastman began the bicentennial school lunch project in Exeter with the Boston Tea Party lunch. Later in the autumn, she spotted the tea party ship, Beaver II, which had been restored by the Salada Tea Company and is anchored in Boston harbor. Inspired by the connection between the ship and the menu, the school lunch director decided to recreate the event with her students.

She talked the matter over with the social studies chairman at Exeter High School, Frank Otis. They decided to use volunteers from the school's honors history class. The six boys who finally went aboard the Beaver were selected by lot because there were too many volunteers.

The "Indians" who climbed aboard the Beaver included Frank Otis and Chester Willey, a social studies teacher. Blankets, feathers, moccasins and even six hatchets borrowed from an Exeter hardware store were props. At the ship the students learned that the hatchets were appropriate because tea chests on the first Beaver weighed 150 pounds and were easier to heave overboard after some of the tea had been dumped out. The "Indians" of 1975 wrapped themselves in blankets just as the earlier "Indians" did when Sam Adams led them on the raid in 1773.

The spirit of the event was captured by Tony Pepper, WBZ-TV commentator, who said he thought a



What attracts students to school lunch?

A varied menu?

Some Pennsylvania schools offered more choice, and participation soared.

Express yourself! Be an independent thinker! That's what school children in Souderton, Pennsylvania, are being encouraged to do these days.

The Souderton Area School District serves 5,700 children from six small municipalities located in the beautiful rolling hills of Pennsylvania's Montgomery County. The township is semi-rural and historic, and the people of Souderton are proud of their traditions. But they're also interested in new ideas, and their school system contains some of the most innovative practices around.

Souderton children are encouraged to start thinking for themselves and to make decisions, beginning in the first grade. According to the district's teaching philosophy, children need to learn about the past and present, but they also need to develop skills that will help them adapt to and master the challenges of the future. Skills to help them deal with a changing environment, analyze and evaluate new information and use it to solve old problems, and make decisions.

This philosophy extends to the system's school food service, where even the youngest students have the privilege of choosing from among several Type A lunch menus.

Each day, the food service staff lets the kids decide. Will it be the "regular" lunch, with an entree like veal parmesan and their choice between two out of three vegetables? Or the "soup and sandwich" combination, featuring a bologna and cheese sandwich, tomato soup, and a choice of vegetable? Or, the third choice—a hot dog and soup, with

choice of one vegetable. All three choices come with milk and dessert.

District school food service director Thelma Becker began offering a choice to elementary students 2 years ago. And since then, there's been a big boost in the number of children eating lunch at school.

"Although most of our children live very near school, we now have an average daily participation rate of 93 percent in our seven elementary schools, 96 percent in our two junior highs, and 77 percent in our high school," says Ms. Becker.

"When we started offering the kids in elementary school a choice between two lunches back in April 1973, we raised student participation 10 percent," she explains. "Then last March, we decided to give the students a third choice, and participation increased an additional 15 percent. I was tremendously pleased."

But increasing participation was not Ms. Becker's primary motivation. When she decided to try adding a second lunch choice as a pilot project at Salford Hills Elementary, the food service director explains, the aim was to integrate the lunch program with the open classroom approach being used throughout the rest of the school.

"I don't see how educators can encourage children to be independent thinkers and to make responsible decisions," she says, "and then turn around and never give them an opportunity to make a choice."

Neither did Salford's principal, B. Arnold Guth. Confident that the school lunch program would provide the perfect "exercise in decision-making," he welcomed Ms. Becker's expanded menu.

The cafeteria staff at Salford became enthusiastic too, with encouragement from Ms. Becker, who worked closely with them.

"When you increase the workload without increasing the staff," the food service director points out, "you must do a lot of training and make

sure that your staff knows that you're depending upon them and want to hear suggestions and complaints."

The introduction of the second lunch made believers out of both the cafeteria staff and the teachers, as the kids testified to their approval by buying more lunches and leaving less on their plates.

"It was the amount of plate waste that really started me thinking about adding a choice of menus in the elementary schools," says Ms. Becker. "Although we had 70 percent average daily participation offering one lunch, it was alarming to see how much food was being thrown away. I kept thinking, the kids aren't happy, and the parents can't be happy either if they know their children aren't eating their lunches."

The first 2 weeks of the two-menu system, the switchboard was kept busy with calls from happy parents. The overwhelmingly favorable response to the Salford program quickly created a demand for the soup and sandwich menu in the other six elementary schools in the district.

As she had done at Salford, Ms. Becker worked with the food service staffs at each school to carefully prepare them to offer a second menu. And 2 years later, everyone was eager to add a third choice—the soup and hot dog menu.

Adding a third menu affected each school's lunch program even more radically than adding a second one. Districtwide, the 15 percent increase in participation was matched by an 18 percent decrease in plate waste.

In addition to the choice system, Ms. Becker has been experimenting with some other new ideas. One is a ticket system that uses color-coded tickets and the alphabet, and it's now a pilot project at Telford Elementary. Children buy their tickets early in the morning in the principal's office. Then they line up by class in alphabetical order in the cafeteria and request a blue, red or yellow ticket—depending on whether they choose

the regular lunch, the soup and sandwich of the day, or the soup and hot dog selection. Colorful nutrition education posters line the walls.

A member of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition, Ms. Becker hopes to share her experiences with other school lunch directors and encourage them to try their own new ideas. Right now, she's testing a family style lunch program in one elementary school and has arranged for other grade schools to participate in a recipe acceptability study being conducted by the Agricultural Research Service.

Independent thinking. Freedom of choice. Concepts that are part of our heritage, and part of our future, too. Just like in Souderton, Pennsylvania, where an innovative school lunch program keeps the tradition alive.

Attractive surroundings?

A redecorating project saved a Colorado school's lunch program.

A homeroom mother, whose food service experience was limited to the family kitchen, stepped in as cafeteria manager at a Colorado school and remodeled the lunch program in more ways than one.

Two years ago, when Edelle Foley first volunteered her services, less than 40 percent of the students at Blessed Sacrament Elementary, a parochial school in Denver, Colorado, were buying school lunches. But now, since she's introduced fresh menu ideas and turned the cafeteria into a sidewalk cafe, at least 100 more students are eating lunch at school each day.

Ms. Foley's son Patrick is a student at the school. After she heard rumors that the lunch program might be discontinued due to lack of interest, Ms. Foley offered to help with the cooking and serving.

"We were still operating in the black," recalls Sister Margaret, Blessed Sacrament principal, "but were faced with having to raise prices to compensate for low participation. We felt higher prices would eliminate some children from the program."

Ms. Foley was willing to do anything to keep the lunch program going—even take over the manager's job when the entire staff quit at the end of the 1974 school year.

"I didn't know anything about school food service," says Ms. Foley, whose work experience was limited to banks and department stores. "I was very apprehensive about the job but agreed to give it a try."

And try she did. During the summer, she enrolled in a week-long school food service workshop, sponsored by the Colorado State Department of Education.

"Without that course and the help of the parochial school lunch association, I never would have made it through the first year," says Ms. Foley.

But she learned quickly, and within a couple of months the program was running without a hitch.

That's when Ms. Foley took stock of her basement cafeteria and realized that the drab atmosphere could be contributing to the low program participation.

"I talked to the parish Father about redecorating and he agreed that it would certainly help," Ms. Foley recalls. "But he explained there was no money in the budget for the project."

So Ms. Foley decided to do a little fund raising of her own, capitalizing on the weekly bingo parties at the school. She and her husband, a banker by profession and a Blessed Sacrament alumnus, prepared six trays of pizza for each of these gatherings. If they sold all six trays, and they usual-

ly did, the redecorating fund increased \$36.

"We'd start about 4 p.m., making everything from scratch," explains Ms. Foley, who learned the tricks of preparing authentic pizza from her Italian parents. In fact her heritage has paid off in more ways than one—the family recipes she uses at school are now student favorites.

Plans for converting the cafeteria to a sidewalk cafe were drawn up by an architect friend of the Foleys who donated his time for the project. But the Foleys were responsible for all the work—painting, sewing, building and installing.

"I bought burlap by the bolt from Kansas City," says Ms. Foley. She worked nights and weekends hand-stitching 200 8-inch strips for the striped awnings that cover two walls of the cafeteria.

The Foleys painted the walls a light color to accent the black grillwork they constructed from plastic furring strips. And they installed lamps bought on sale that are replicas of gas lanterns.

"We spent less than \$100 on materials," estimates Ms. Foley, "and it was worth every penny. The redecorating project has renewed interest in the lunch program. Some people are realizing for the first time that we have a cafeteria."

But Ms. Foley isn't the only one pleased with the results. Students expressed their appreciation for the Foleys' hard work by presenting them with a scroll at the end of last year.

And parents have insisted on holding all school meetings in the revamped cafeteria. Other parishes even borrow the facility for their school business sessions.

"Several parochial schools in the Denver area have lost their lunch programs for lack of interest, so everyone is very interested in what we've accomplished here," says Sister Margaret. "Maybe we'll be an inspiration for the others who are still struggling." ☆

ELIZABETH FRIAR

Energetic Lady Directs Volunteer Services

Michigan's volunteer program encourages communities to find ways to help the needy through food stamps

By Russ Forte

Her horoscope says she is "self-controlled, courageous, ambitious, eloquent, polite, courteous, practical and sensible." It goes on to say that she "loves praise and flattery."

Her co-workers will attest to the former, and she gleefully admits to the latter.

Elizabeth Albee Friar administers Michigan's volunteer social services, and if the stars determined her lively personality, her ability is no accident of fate, but the result of 34 years in volunteer and social work.

Volunteer services, a division of Michigan's department of social services, runs 80 different programs, but helping food stamp recipients and providing communities with food stamp information are two of the volunteers' major activities.

"Our transportation operation gets shut-ins and people in outlying areas to the store," said Ms. Friar. "It brings them together for meetings, recreation, church, and, of course, gets them down to the food stamp certification office to apply for food stamps and to buy them."

Ms. Friar began the volunteer program in Wexford County when she was director of the county's department of social services. The effort caught the attention of the State government, and Ms. Friar was asked to run volunteer services statewide.

"You can't maintain our kind of system with only a paid staff—the budget would be astronomical," Ms.

Friar said. "Volunteers, on the other hand, are available for those few hours when they're needed."

"Sparsely populated counties don't have the services metropolitan areas have," she continued. "It takes the extra concern and individual effort that volunteers can give to reach people."



Last year, Michigan's 83 counties had about 40,000 volunteers. Because of volunteer participation, Michigan gets \$10 of services for every dollar spent in food stamp outreach.

"Volunteers are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, such as gas or mileage," Ms. Friar said, "but they get no pay."

The volunteers work hard and, sometimes, long hours. They are the backbone of Michigan's outreach effort, and Ms. Friar spends a lot of

time recruiting workers.

To involve new people in the program, Ms. Friar speaks to community groups and trains volunteers and members of her staff to recruit and train others.

She works with the United Way, Community Chest and other private agencies to establish volunteer bureaus. At volunteer meetings organized by her staff on the county level, she also encourages participants to locate new volunteers.

"When you're working with volunteers, if you need more staff, you find it! If you need more money, you raise it!" said Ms. Friar emphatically. "You're not tied to personnel ceilings and budgets. You go out and knock on doors to get it!"

Ms. Friar emphasizes the personal aspect of the volunteers' work. Her volunteers are special people who fill specific program needs; jobs range from answering questions on a food stamp "hot line" to teaching nutrition and menu planning.

"We were trying to interest one particularly smart shopper in joining our volunteer program to show food stamp clients how to spend their money better," said Ms. Friar. "But she was embarrassed to tell someone else how to shop. Finally, she took a client shopping. When both finished, our smart shopper had purchased far more for the same money than the client. The client wanted to know how she did it. And that gave our volunteer the 'in' she felt she needed."

Volunteers work with groups at food stamp certification centers in "friendly visitor classes," which quite often involve outside members of the community. One volunteer, who held a class on shopping, brought in a beautician as a volunteer to also explain the basics of good grooming. Another volunteer brought in several friends to teach sewing.

Forty-nine percent of Ms. Friar's volunteers are men, and, on the average, men work about 2 hours a week more than women in the program. The youngest volunteer is a 2-month-old baby, and the oldest is a 105-year-old woman.

"The little girl was such a hit at one of our friendly visitors classes with the older people that her mother

signed her up as a volunteer," said Ms. Friar. "The oldest is a resident of a nursing home. She reads five newspapers a day and gives other residents of the home an update on news, sports, and columns giving advice to the love-lorn."

To encourage continued participation in the volunteer program, Ms. Friar presents certificates of achievement from the governor to outstanding volunteers at special meetings. She also discusses individual outreach efforts at these meetings.

"If they have a good food stamp outreach program, I tell them so," said Ms. Friar. "If they don't, I tell them that, too."

Volunteer service provides rewards for both recipients and volunteers. Some volunteers have built work records that have helped them move into paying jobs.

"Some clients are themselves volunteers, and also progress with skills they learn," Ms. Friar said. "Like the volunteer who was teaching third-to-seventh-grade dropouts to read and write. She did so well at it that another volunteer went to bat for her, and helped her win a scholarship

to Michigan State University. She will probably graduate in about a year."

Medical professionals also volunteer their time, and sometimes their services. Michigan is actively involved with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Title 18 health surveillance program, and volunteers routinely refer food stamp recipients who might need medical help, exams or glasses to health screening units or clinics.

Ms. Friar is very concerned about acceptance of the food stamp program in the community. In outreach work, she has found community attitude can affect participation. For example, in one low participation county, Ms. Friar approached the county board and found that most members felt the food stamp program was a giveaway program, an attitude shared by most other people in the community.

In the effort to correct the impression, Ms. Friar developed a speakers bureau to address local organizations. The bureau helped explain the program and point out that only a relatively small number of food stamp recipients receive free food

coupons; the majority pay some part of the face value of the stamps based on household income.

Over a 4-month period, Ms. Friar changed county residents' attitudes toward food stamps, and now the community actively supports the food stamp program.

This feeling of local cooperation is also very strong in Huron County. When the county's social services department converted an old school bus to a mobile food stamp sales office, the renovation became a community project. Volunteers ripped out the bus's interior and reupholstered, painted, and paneled it, then installed a cashier's cage and carpeting. After its exterior was sanded and painted, the office was ready to roll. And the bus has worked so well, Ms. Friar hopes to extend the idea to the whole State.

Michigan is making a concerted effort to reach the elderly, shut-ins, minorities and the very poor with information on food stamps. But perhaps the most significant aspect of the program remains the concern and personal involvement the volunteer brings to the program. ☆



Ms. Friar visits Huron County, where volunteers converted an old bus to a mobile food stamp sales office. The volunteers removed the interior and reupholstered, painted and paneled, then installed a cashier's cage and carpeting. They sanded and painted the exterior, adding a sign that says WE CARE, and the office was ready to greet food stamp customers. The renovation became a real community effort in the county.

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